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NEW MEXICO BUSINESS

CURRENT ECONOMIC REPORT

Vol. 8 No. 4
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Developing Data Bases: Census Update

April 1, 1990 is less than 3 years away, and plans are being finalized for the next decennial census. Although some questions remain unresolved, what is known now about the 1990 census portends a significant expansion of the detailed, local area information that is only available from a decennial census. The standard, state and county data bases simply do not enable profiling the communities in the sparsely populated rural areas or discerning differential trends within metropolitan areas. It is the subcounty area detail that reveals the differences between Corrales and Rio Rancho or depicts the more rapid growth of areas outside Las Cruces relative to the city's population growth. The array of small area statistics from the decennial census is especially useful in New Mexico. And each phase of the 1990 census—from data collection through tabulation and report—will deliver more data for small areas.

Data collection and tabulation will enhance the availability, and the reliability, of small area data through a new, automated geographic data base and a proposed alternative technique for avoiding the disclosure of personal, confidential information. The Census Bureau's revolutionary geographic data base, the TIGER system, provides the base for blocking the entire nation and integrates each of the geographic operations necessary to a census. Blocking the country will expand greatly the number of areas for which data are reported. Previously, only the metropolitan areas and select cities were blocked. Rural areas and smaller cities were represented by expansive enumeration districts that obscured small area detail. Reducing the base geographic area to blocks (which may be defined as closed polygons in rural areas) will provide more information about the distribution and characteristics of the population outside metropolitan areas. Integrating the geographic operations from previously separate, step-by-step functions of linking addresses, geographic locations, and census areas will improve the accuracy of geocoding and tabulating data for all the new blocks.

Of course, many of the additional blocks in sparsely populated areas will have no population, or populations that are too small to escape suppression. In 1980, the Census Bureau used complementary suppression as their disclosure avoidance technique. This method of protecting confidentiality suppressed data for everyone in an area if there was a possibility of obtaining personal information for a small minority by subtracting data for the majority population from totals.

To avoid suppressing so much data, another technique is being considered for 1990—random rounding. This method obscures personal data in small areas by introducing controlled rounding. For example, a multiple of a common base like 3 would be added to the tabulations. Data for smaller areas will not sum precisely to totals for larger geographic areas, but more information can be reported via random rounding. A final decision between random rounding and complementary suppression has not been made yet; however, at this point, random rounding appears to be the more likely procedure to be adopted for disclosure avoidance.

Changes in the questionnaire do not represent an expansion per se in the data collection. In fact, an effort is made to avoid increasing the length of the questionnaire and therefore, the burden on the respondent. Topics that are added to the questions are generally balanced by cuts. However, it is useful to review some of the proposed changes in the 1990 questionnaire.

The two questions that created the most confusion in 1980 census data for New Mexico, race and Spanish origin, are likely to continue that confusion in 1990. Simplification of the race question has been proposed through a combination of all the Asian/Pacific Islander groups. This change does not address the problem that persons of Spanish origin had in 1980 with race categories and the tendency to select "other races." A combination race/Spanish origin question and sequencing of the separate questions have been tested, but neither alternative fared well in the tests. Solution to the problem that New Mexicans had with the categories of Spanish origin that were offered in 1980 (Mexican American, Cuban, Puerto Rican, and "other") has not been found yet either. Nationally, a simple yes/no question tested well, but not in Los Angeles, where problems with the Mexican-American category persisted. Testing on this question continues.

Other changes in population questions include revision of the question on education to determine degrees received rather than just numbers of years in college or post-secondary education; limitation of the question on disability to persons aged 18 years and over; and addition of information on pension income and departure time for work. Items deleted from the population questions include marital history, car pooling, transportation-related disability, weeks looking for work, and activity 5 years prior to the census. A question on health insurance coverage was also considered, but dropped at the last minute.

Additions to the housing information include a complete-count question on units in structure, a question on congregate housing (meals included in rent), extensions of the questions on home heating devices and fuel and water heating to offer

(Continued on page 7)

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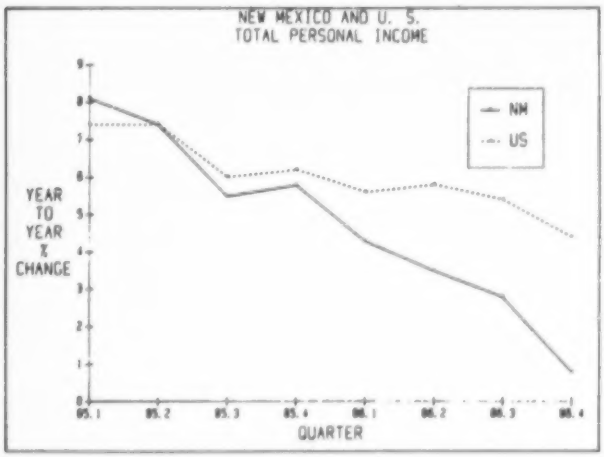
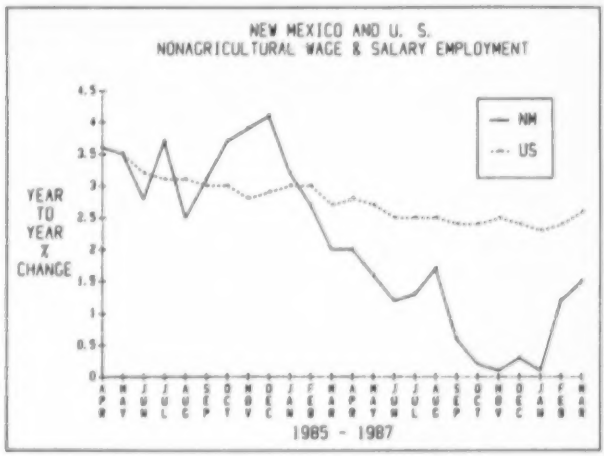
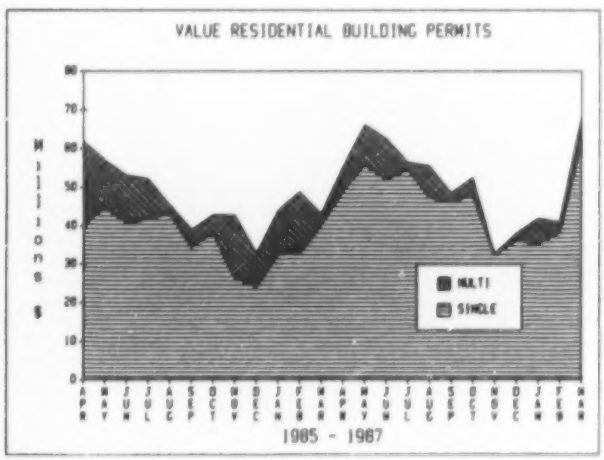
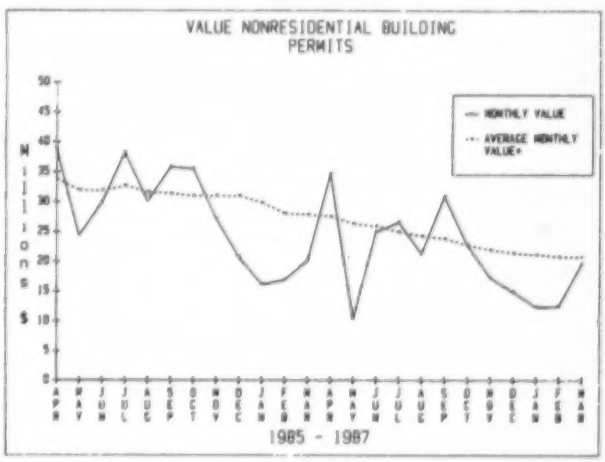
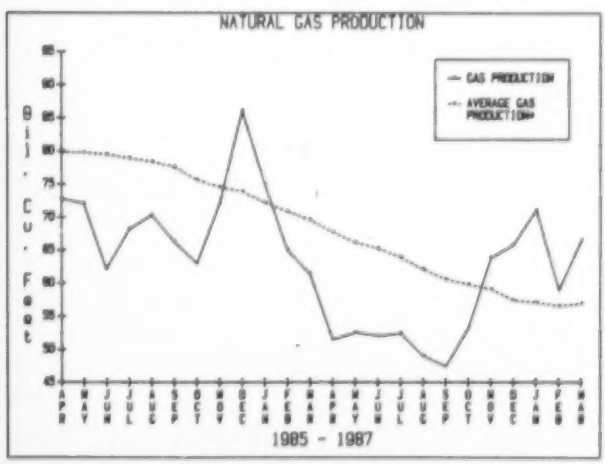
ECONOMIC TRENDS IN NEW MEXICO

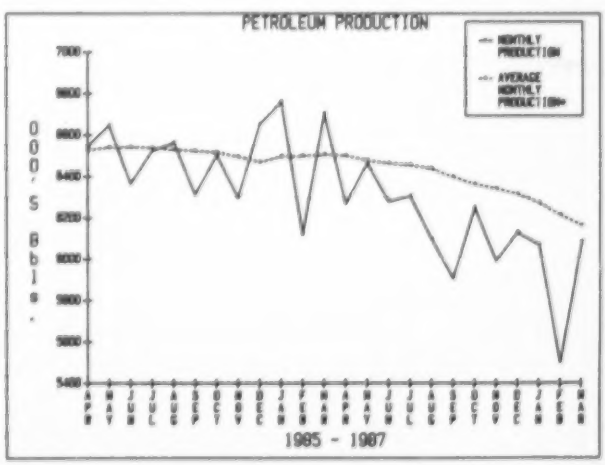












*12 month moving average. For example, the point for August, 1986 represents an average of data from September, 1985 through August, 1986.

U.S. ECONOMIC INDICATORS

	CURRENT MO/QTR	CURRENT DATA	% CHANGE YEAR AGO	PREVIOUS MO/ QTR DATA
Consumer price index				
All urban consumers (1967=100)				
All items	Mar 87	335.9	3.0	334.4
Food and beverages	Mar 87	321.6	4.5	321.6
Housing	Mar 87	366.4	2.6	365.1
Apparel and upkeep	Mar 87	215.2	4.3	208.4
Transportation	Mar 87	310.6	0.3	310.0
Medical care	Mar 87	455.0	6.9	452.4
Entertainment	Mar 87	279.8	2.9	278.7
Other goods and services	Mar 87	360.3	5.6	359.7
Revised series, wage earners and clerical workers (1967=100)				
All items	Mar 87	330.5	2.8	329.0
Gross national product* ($Bil. constant)	I 87	3735.2	2.2	3696.1
Prime interest rate** (% per annum)	Mar 87	7.5	-16.6	7.5
Mortgage interest rate*** (% per annum)	Mar 87	9.1	-12.8	9.2
3 month treasury bill# (% per annum)	Mar 87	5.6	-15.6	5.6
Industrial production## (1977=100)	Mar 87	126.7	2.6	127.1
Manufacturers new orders## ($Bil.)	Mar 87	198.9	5.3	194.3

NEW MEXICO AND U.S. COMPARISONS

		NEW MEXICO			UNITED STATES		
	CURRENT MO/QTR	CURRENT MO/QTR DATA	% CHANGE YEAR AGO	PREVIOUS MO/QTR DATA	CURRENT MO/QTR DATA	% CHANGE YEAR AGO	PREVIOUS MO/QTR DATA
Employment (000)	Mar 87	612.4	2.4	604.2	110,229	2.5	109,464
Unemployment rate (%)	Mar 87	9.2	-2.1	9.6	6.9	-7.9	7.2
Nonagricultural employment (000)	Mar 87	531.2	1.6	527.3	101,148	2.6	100,500
Personal income### ($Mil.)	IV 86	16,421	2.0	16,296	3,529,745	4.5	3,498,710
Housing units permitted							
Single	Mar 87	918	48.4	551	102,957	14.8	68,963
Multi	Mar 87	233	150.6	89	49,166	-20.5	31,529

Note: Selected data items subject to revision.
N Not available.
* 1982 dollars at seasonally adjusted annual rates.
** Closing rate for month.
*** Effective rate (in the primary market) on conventional mortgages, reflecting fees and charges as well as contract rate and assumed, on the average, repayment at end of 10 years.
# Rate on new issues within period; bank discount basis.
Monthly data seasonally adjusted.
Quarterly data seasonally adjusted at annual rates.
Sources: U. S. Department of Labor, News: CPI data;
New Mexico Employment Security Department and U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: employment and unemployment data.
U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis: income data;
U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census: construction data.
U. S. Council of Economic Advisors, Economic Indicators: all other data.

NEW MEXICO ECONOMIC INDICATORS

	CURRENT MO/QTR	CURRENT DATA	% CHANGE YEAR AGO	PREVIOUS MO/QTR DATA	% CHANGE# 12 MONTH AVERAGES
1. GENERAL					
Civilian labor force* (000)	Mar 87	674.6	2.2	668.7	4.2
Total employment* (000)	Mar 87	612.4	2.4	604.2	3.8
Unemployment* (000)	Mar 87	62.2	0.4	64.5	8.5
Unemployment rate (%)	Mar 87	9.2	-2.1	9.6	4.5
Weekly new unemployment insurance claims	Mar 87	1439.0	-29.3	1613.0	10.2
Nonagricultural wage/salary employment**(000)	Mar 87	531.2	1.6	527.3	1.1
New business incorporations	Feb 87	188.0	1.1	215.0	-17.3
Personal income*** ($ mil.)	IV 86	16421.0	2.0	16296.0	3.2
2. AGRICULTURAL RECEIPTS					
Livestock and products ($ mil.)	Jan 87	72.6	6.2	39.6	0.0
Crops ($ mil.)	Jan 87	17.7	-24.0	31.2	-17.8
Total ($ mil.)	Jan 87	90.2	-1.6	70.8	-6.1
3. MINING					
Employment** (000)	Mar 87	14.7	-16.9	14.7	-25.1
Average hourly earnings ($)	Mar 87	12.00	-4.6	12.12	4.2
Petroleum production (000 bbls.)	Mar 87	6087.8	-9.1	5500.7	-5.9
Natural gas production (bil. cu. ft.)	Mar 87	66.5	8.5	58.9	-17.9
Coal production (000 short tons)	Mar 87	950.0	-48.7	1468.0	-12.4
Oil well completions&	Mar 87	32.0	-44.8	38.0	-51.7
Gas well completions&	Mar 87	17.0	-34.6	21.0	-68.5
Total footage drilled&& (000)	Mar 87	368.0	-38.4	345.2	-56.9
Oil sales ($ mil.)	Jan 87	93.2	-39.0	81.0	-48.4
Gas sales ($ mil.)	Jan 87	106.5	-38.5	95.5	-47.7
4. CONSTRUCTION					
Employment** (000)	Mar 87	33.4	-2.3	32.6	-5.1
Average hourly earnings ($)	Mar 87	10.58	-4.1	10.66	0.9
Residential units permitted	Mar 87	1151.0	61.7	640.0	-11.4
Residential building permits ($ mil.)	Mar 87	67.7	56.4	41.0	9.8
Nonresidential building permits ($ mil.)	Mar 87	19.6	-2.4	12.5	-27.1
Residential construction contracts ($ mil.)	Mar 87	60.9	-6.8	46.9	-5.8
Nonresidential construction contracts ($mil.)	Mar 87	72.4	151.4	43.5	-7.5
Nonbuilding construction contracts ($ mil.)	Mar 87	26.6	-20.3	14.3	-7.7
5. TRANSPORTATION/COMMUNICATION/UTILITIES					
Employment** (000)	Mar 87	28.9	-2.0	28.8	-2.6
Average hourly earnings## ($)	Mar 87	13.58	15.3	13.56	12.2
6. MANUFACTURING					
Employment** (000)	Mar 87	37.1	1.7	37.0	0.9
Average hourly earnings ($)	Mar 87	8.55	-2.7	8.67	3.1
Electric & electronic equipment employment** (000)	Mar 87	4.3	-6.5	4.4	-16.6
Transportation equipment employment** (000)	Mar 87	4.3	7.5	4.1	2.5
Food & kindred products employment** (000)	Mar 87	4.1	7.9	4.1	2.4
Textile & apparel employment** (000)	Mar 87	2.4	0.0	2.4	0.0
Lumber & wood products employment** (000)	Mar 87	2.6	8.4	2.6	3.9

NEW MEXICO ECONOMIC INDICATORS (continued)

	CURRENT MO/QTR	CURRENT DATA	% CHANGE YEAR AGO	PREVIOUS MO/QTR DATA	% CHANGE# 12 MONTH AVERAGES
7. TRADE					
Wholesale employment** (000)	Mar 87	22.4	-0.8	22.3	-2.1
Retail employment** (000)	Mar 87	103.9	3.5	103.8	4.3
Average hourly earnings ($)	Mar 87	6.83	0.6	6.89	1.5
8. FINANCE/INSURANCE/REAL ESTATE					
Employment** (000)	Mar 87	27.0	2.3	26.9	2.7
Bank average hourly earnings ($)	Mar 87	5.91	2.1	5.98	3.8
Bank total assets ($ mil.)	III 86	9512.4	3.2	9515.6	4.9
Bank total deposits ($mil.)	III 86	8220.9	2.8	8195.7	4.4
Bank gross loans ($ mil.)	III 86	5539.2	0.1	5608.4	3.6
S & L total assets ($ mil.)	Feb 87	5663.0	10.1	5659.1	14.2
S & L total deposits ($ mil.)	Feb 87	4569.3	7.5	4524.5	10.6
S & L new mortgage loans closed&&& ($ mil.)	Feb 87	124.3	42.6	111.9	7.6
9. SERVICES AND TOURISM					
Total service employment** (000)	Mar 87	121.1	4.4	119.9	3.5
Lodging employment** (000)	Mar 87	11.5	10.6	11.2	7.4
Eating & drinking places employment** (000)	Mar 87	37.0	2.5	36.8	5.0
Visits to state parks (000)	Dec 86	202.9	16.9	248.1	18.9
Visits to national parks/monuments (000)	Mar 87	147.6	-31.6	72.5	1.0
Passenger traffic at Albuquerque airport@ (000)	Mar 87	370.6	5.9	292.7	7.6
Lodgers tax receipts ($ 000)	IV 86	1792.2	3.3	2265.0	N
Lodging occupancy rates (%)	Mar 87	57.7	5.9	49.9	-5.7
10. GOVERNMENT					
Total government employment** (000)	Mar 87	142.7	2.0	141.3	3.2
Federal employment** (000)	Mar 87	30.5	2.1	30.2	0.4
State employment** @@ (000)	Mar 87	52.5	1.4	51.6	5.7
Local employment** (000)	Mar 87	59.7	2.5	59.5	2.7
Total general fund revenues@@@ ($ mil.)	Mar 87	128.2	-2.3	93.4	6.8

Note: selected data items subject to revision.
N Not available.
* Number of persons by place of residence.
** Number of jobs by place of work.
*** Quarterly data seasonally adjusted at annual rates.
& These include wells that are in the following categories: new drillings, deepened, plugged back, reentry and additional zone.
&& Oil and gas combined.
&&& New mortgage loans closed equals the previously carried item "Total loans closed" plus a relatively insignificant additional loan category.
# For example, in the report that contained June 1985 figures this would be the percent change in the average of July 1983 to June 1984 data versus the average of July 1984 to June 1985 data.
Communications and utilities only.
@ Passenger traffic includes enplanements and deplanements.
@@ This figure includes full and part time employment at Los Alamos National Laboratories (LANL). Full time employment alone at LANL is 7,955 as of AUGUST 1986 according to U. S. Dept. of Energy, Public Affairs.
@@@ Includes recurring and non-recurring revenues.

Sources: New Mexico Employment Security Dept.: Sections 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10;
Dun and Bradstreet, Inc.: Section 1;
U. S. Dept of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis: Section 1;
USDA Statistical Reporting Service: Section 2;
New Mexico Energy and Minerals Dept., Oil and Gas Conservation Division: Section 3;
New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Dept., Oil and Gas Accounting Division: Section 3;
U. S. Dept. of Energy, Energy Information Administration: Section 3;
U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census: Section 4;
F. W. Dodge Company (a division of McGraw Hill, Inc.): Section 4;
U. S. Federal Reserve: Section 8;
Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas: Section 8;
New Mexico Natural Resources Dept., Parks and Recreation Division: Section 9;
U. S. National Park Service: Section 9;
City of Albuquerque, Albuquerque International Airport: Section 9;
New Mexico Dept. of Finance and Administration, Local Government Division: Section 9;
Parnell, Kerr and Forster: Section 9;
New Mexico Dept. of Finance and Administration: Section 10.

CITIES, COUNTIES AND FEATURES

GROSS RECEIPTS# FROM RETAIL TRADE
TOP 20 CITIES
($000)

	CURRENT 3 MONTH AVERAGE* JAN-MAR	% CHANGE AVERAGE YEAR AGO	PREVIOUS 3 MONTH AVERAGE* OCT-DEC
Alamogordo	$ 14,742	5.7	$ 13,464
Albuquerque	237,035	4.7	231,182
Artesia	5,281	-12.5	4,628
Carlsbad	11,975	-7.7	13,379
Clovis	16,366	-1.2	15,434
Deming	5,519	18.8	4,709
Espanola	6,897	2.5	7,180
Farmington	26,725	-12.2	25,674
Gallup	21,370	4.6	21,244
Hobbs	15,798	-22.0	14,547
Las Cruces	34,967	3.3	33,713
Las Vegas	5,982	1.8	5,683
Los Alamos	6,980	12.7	6,091
Grants	3,617	-12.1	3,617
Portales	6,840	32.3	6,482
Roswell	19,666	1.1	18,442
Ruidoso	6,143	26.9	4,970
Santa Fe	45,203	4.9	44,976
Silver City	7,514	8.3	6,958
Taos	7,078	10.9	6,650
State total	628,605	1.0	607,523

\# Gross receipts reported are for gross receipts tax purposes, which do not include all the receipts of all firms.
* Averages are used to smooth out fluctuations in the data, which are not caused by changes in economic conditions.
Note: Due to declining sales activity in Lovington, Grants now replaces Lovington in the top 20 cities.

Source: New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department.

NEW MEXICO CONSTRUCTION
SELECTED CITIES

	NUMBER OF BUILDING UNITS OR PERMITS *				VALUE OF BUILDING PERMITS ($000)			
	MARCH 87	MARCH 86	CUMULATIVE TOTAL THROUGH MARCH 87	CUMULATIVE TOTAL THROUGH MARCH 86	MARCH 87	MARCH 86	CUMULATIVE TOTAL THROUGH MARCH 87	CUMULATIVE TOTAL THROUGH MARCH 86
RESIDENTIAL**								
Alamogordo	33	23	79	77	$ 1,375	$ 795	$ 3,475	$ 3,465
Albuquerque	552	247	1,115	1,802	29,590	16,669	60,702	63,073
Carlsbad	6	9	21	17	402	372	1,217	779
Clovis	10	20	25	38	594	1,060	1,704	2,058
Farmington	12	6	24	24	733	192	1,343	879
Hobbs	5	0	9	9	261	0	578	465
Las Cruces	40	27	317	150	2,345	1,603	11,248	7,308
Los Alamos	10	3	22	8	1,630	415	4,189	870
Rio Rancho***	121	97	341	310	6,317	5,541	19,282	14,795
Roswell	9	13	21	28	491	672	1,203	1,128
Ruidoso	23	3	25	81	1,208	256	1,335	3,079
Santa Fe	19	37	48	74	1,588	2,441	3,764	5,171
NONRESIDENTIALr								
Alamogordo	6	6	14	20	636	140	791	209
Albuquerque	4	4	21	16	4,889	3,950	17,233	14,258
Carlsbad	5	9	8	23	35	23	49	259
Clovis	1	9	8	16	1	1,120	365	1,459
Farmington	2	6	5	8	330	929	607	1,096
Hobbs	0	3	2	9	0	219	52	935
Las Cruces	20	20	44	48	4,405	1,996	6,155	4,506
Los Alamos	0	2	2	12	0	600	6	3,126
Rio Rancho***	5	7	10	10	935	2,869	1,443	3,577
Roswell	9	9	18	20	205	30	219	78
Ruidoso	0	4	1	5	0	67	32	1,214
Santa Fe	5	2	10	9	1,407	80	2,872	561

Note: Top twelve cities chosen on basis of residential construction activity during the period 1982 through 1984.
r 1985 data is revised.
* Residential data shows the number of permitted units, while nonresidential data shows the number of permits.
** Residential data includes both single and multi family units.
*** AMREP Southwest, Inc. reported Rio Rancho data.

Sources: AMREP Southwest, Inc.: Rio Rancho only;
U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census: all others.

CITIES, COUNTIES AND FEATURES (continued)

ESTIMATED CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT
(000)

	NEW MEXICO			ALBUQUERQUE MSA*			LAS CRUCES MSA**			SANTA FE MSA***		
	MARCHp	% CHANGE YEAR AGO	FEB. r	MARCHp	% CHANGE YEAR AGO	FEB. r	MARCHp	% CHANGE YEAR AGO	FEB. r	MARCHp	% CHANGE YEAR AGO	FEB. r
TOTAL CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	674.6	2.2	668.7	259.2	3.9	256.8	55.8	5.3	54.7	64.6	5.4	63.4
Employment@	612.4	2.4	604.2	243.3	4.2	240.6	51.8	6.0	50.8	60.8	5.4	59.4
Unemployment	62.2	0.4	64.5	15.9	-0.6	16.2	4.0	-2.4	3.9	3.8	8.6	4.0
Unemployment rate (%)	9.2	-2.1	9.6	6.1	-4.6	6.3	7.2	-6.4	7.1	5.9	1.8	6.3
NONAGRICULTURAL WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT	531.2	1.6	527.3	231.1	3.0	228.8	41.2	4.6	40.9	54.1	5.7	53.5
Mining	14.7	-16.9	14.7	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	-49.9	0.1
Contract construction	33.4	-2.3	32.6	16.9	5.0	16.3	2.7	3.9	2.6	3.1	10.8	3.1
Manufacturing	37.1	1.7	37.0	19.3	0.0	19.3	3.1	0.0	3.1	1.6	0.0	1.6
Durable goods	24.1	0.5	24.0	13.9	0.0	13.9	1.2	0.0	1.2	1.0	0.0	1.0
Nondurable goods	13.0	4.0	13.0	5.4	0.0	5.4	1.9	0.0	1.9	0.6	0.0	0.6
Transportation & public utilities	28.9	-2.0	28.8	12.5	2.5	12.4	1.4	0.0	1.4	1.2	-7.6	1.2
Trade	126.3	2.7	126.1	58.5	3.4	58.4	7.6	1.4	7.7	10.4	8.4	10.5
Wholesale	22.4	-0.8	22.3	14.2	0.8	14.1	0.8	-11.1	0.9	0.7	0.0	0.7
Retail	103.9	3.5	103.8	44.3	4.3	44.3	6.8	1.5	6.9	9.7	9.0	9.8
Finance, insurance, & real estate	27.0	2.3	26.9	14.6	4.3	14.4	1.6	0.0	1.6	2.2	10.0	2.1
Services	121.1	4.4	119.9	63.3	4.7	62.9	6.1	9.0	6.1	13.5	5.5	13.2
Government	142.7	2.0	141.3	45.8	0.7	44.9	18.7	5.7	18.5	22.0	4.3	21.8
Federal	30.5	2.1	30.2	13.2	4.0	13.1	4.4	-2.2	4.3	1.5	0.0	1.5
State	52.5	1.4	51.6	13.0	-5.1	12.3	9.1	12.4	9.0	16.5	3.8	16.3
Local	59.7	2.5	59.5	19.6	2.7	19.5	5.2	2.0	5.2	4.0	8.2	4.0

N Not available, less than 50 jobs.
p Preliminary.
r Revised.

* Bernalillo County.
** Dona Ana County.
*** Santa Fe and Los Alamos Counties.
@ Includes labor disputes.

Source: New Mexico Employment Security Department.

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solar as a category, and increases in the upper limit of home value and rent to $500,000 and over and $1,000, respectively. Topics that have been cut include number of units at address, number of stories in building, elevators, cooking fuel, number of bathrooms, and air conditioning. An item of particular interest to areas with seasonal population fluctuations, a question on multiple residences, was considered but cut after testing poorly.

Like the questionnaire, proposed data products from the 1990 census do not represent an overall increase so much as a difference from 1980 census data products. However, the changes that are being considered will enhance the accessibility of the expanded small area data base. Printed reports, for example, will include all census tracts or BNAs (block numbering areas in places that are not tracted). In 1980, census tract data was published only for metropolitan areas and select cities; tract or BNA data for other areas had to be accessed through computer tapes. Other, small area tabulations will include data for school districts, ZIP codes, and—for the first time in New Mexico—census *counts* by precincts. Blocking the entire state and realigning political precinct boundaries to follow visible, physical features have enabled the provision of 1990 census counts for precincts.

And, if none of these areas is of interest to you, the Census Bureau is proposing an alternative, a user-defined areas program that would offer "relatively low cost" standard tabulations for your own area of interest, as delineated by census blocks. No cost estimates have been cited as yet, but the advantage of this program is clear. The Census Bureau can tabulate the data before application of the disclosure avoidance techniques. Anyone with access to block data can aggregate the blocks to any user-defined area totals, but only the Census Bureau can access the raw, unadjusted data which is especially important to tabulations of sample data.

Data delivery will be effected primarily through printed reports, microfiche, computer tapes, and, to a lesser extent, on-line data services and floppy disks. Accessibility to the vast array of small area data, in particular, has been enhanced by a technological development, the advent of compact disks (CDs) as data storage media. The sheer capacity for storage in a media that can be measured in gigabytes rather than the kilobyte measure common to floppy disks or the megabyte measure of

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hard drives makes CDs ideal for the large census data sets. To date, some of the 1980 census data have been transferred to CDs, but the high cost of preparing a master disk for a "read-only" memory (ROM) has been prohibitive to widespread application. In the past couple of years, however, CDs have been advancing from the ROM stage to "write-once-read-mainly" capability (WORM). Given the appeal of erasable media for data storage, this progress in laser disk technology will undoubtedly ensure its importance to the dissemination of census data.

If the expansion of the 1990 census data base is not evident from this discussion so far, consider one final issue that is currently receiving serious study—adjustment of the decennial census counts. The public has been pressuring the Census Bureau to adjust the counts for some time, including about 50 lawsuits filed after the 1980 census. Although none of those lawsuits produced an adjustment, the bureau has responded through study of the possibility of adjusting the 1990 census counts.

Many of the issues involved in the question of adjustment, such as technical feasibility or agreement on the standards of accuracy, have not been resolved. In fact, the decision to adjust or not is unlikely before the Census Bureau has conducted its post-enumeration survey in 1990 to measure the extent of undercount. However, the implications are worth consideration now—there could literally be two sets of 1990 census data.

Whether or not the counts are adjusted, the 1990 census promises enhancement of small area detail and the technological innovation to guarantee accessibility to the data. Again, census data for New Mexico will be available from one of the agencies in the New Mexico State Data Center, including the BBER. Further information about the 1990 census, or the State Data Center affiliate in your area, is available from the Data Bank, 277-6626.

Lynn Bodin Wombold
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Editor's Note:

The dates shown in the "Gross Receipts from Retail Trade" table on page 6 in the March, 1987 and April, 1987 issues were incorrect. In the March issue the current 3 month average should have been labeled Oct-Dec. (same as the January-February, 1987 issue), while in the April issue it should have been labeled Nov.-Jan. The labels for the previous 3 month average in the two issues were also incorrect and should have read July-Sept. and Aug.-Oct., respectively. All calculations are consistent with the revised labels. The data for the Dec.-Feb. current 3 month average will not be published, but is available at the Data Bank, 277-6626.

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